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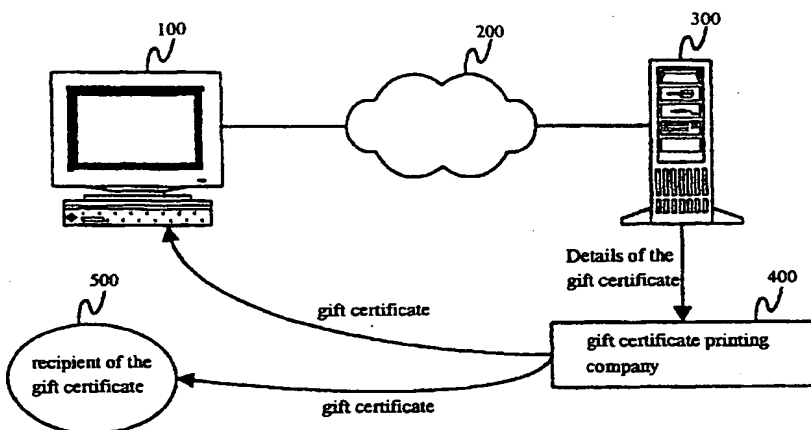
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- (71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): **ITICKET CO., LTD [KR/KR]**; 2nd Floor, 202, Sungdo Venture Tower, 165-2, Samsung-dong, Kangnam-ku, Seoul 135-090 (KR).
- (74) Agent: **KIM, Samsoo**; 3rd floor, Dukwon Bldg, 637-19, Yoksam-dong, Kangnam-ku, Seoul 135-909 (KR).
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(54) Title: **SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR ISSUING CUSTOM-MADE GIFT CERTIFICATES**



(57) Abstract: The present invention discloses a system and method for issuing custom-made gift certificates, wherein purchasers of the gift certificates accessed via the Internet, are allowed to order gift certificates having forms as specified at their disposal. The method for issuing said gift certificates comprises the steps of: allowing a purchaser to design the form of the gift certificate at his disposal; allowing said purchaser to determine the face value(s) and quantity of the gift certificate(s) to be issued; and printing and delivering the gift certificate(s) in accordance with the specification of the purchaser, after the purchaser have paid therefor. The system for issuing said gift certificates comprises: a gift certificate issue server which allows a purchaser accessed via the Internet, to choose the form, face value(s), and quantity of the gift certificate(s); a template database for gift certificates which provides a variety of gift certificate samples for selection by the gift certificate purchaser; a printing system which prints the gift certificate(s) based on the information received from said gift certificate issue server, as specified by said purchaser; and a payment system which processes the payment by said purchaser for the gift certificate(s).

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SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR ISSUING CUSTOM-MADE GIFT CERTIFICATES

TECHNICAL FIELD OF THE INVENTION

5

The present invention relates generally to a system and method for issuing custom-made gift certificates, in particular, to a system and method in which purchaser of the gift certificate can specify the format, the face value, the layout design of the gift certificate, select the applicable merchants to whom the gift certificate can be applied, and then order issuance of the customized gift certificate, online from a distant place.

10

BACKGROUND ART

Generally, a gift certificate refers to a fixed amount bearer security which is redeemable for merchandises handled by the issuer of the gift certificate within the range of the nominal value indicated on the gift certificate.

15

There are two types of gift certificate: While the one such as department store gift certificate or shoemaker's gift certificate is issued by individual enterprise and can be used only at the issuing enterprise, the other one such as book coupon or gift certificate for the cultural events can be used to a plurality of associated enterprises.

20

In the following, the circulation process of a gift certificate is briefly described:

a purchaser purchases a gift certificate at a price equivalent to the face value of the gift certificate or a slightly lower price and presents it to others as a gift; the recipient of the gift certificate exchanges it for a commodity or service that he wants in

a shop where the gift certificate is accepted; the shop which has sold the commodity or service and received therefore; receives an amount equivalent to the face value of the gift certificate from the issuer of the gift certificate, whereby the circulation process of the gift certificate terminates.

5 By the way, gift certificates are generally issued in fixed face values predetermined by the issuing company, for example, as 5,000-Won gift certificate, 10,000-Won gift certificate, 50,000-Won gift certificate, or the like. A possible purchaser desiring to use a gift certificate as a present, bound to purchase it within the limit of his budget, has to seek for other issuer's gift certificate or purchase a plurality
10 of gift certificates in different face values if a gift certificate of the desired face value is not provided for by a selected issuer, which causes inconvenience for the possible purchaser.

For example, assuming that a purchaser has a budget of 70,000Won per person but the issuer provides only gift certificates in the face values of 20,000Won,
15 50,000Won, and 100,000Won, respectively, the purchaser might have to buy a 20,000-Won gift certificate and a 50,000-Won gift certificate for each person. Further, if there is nothing but 50,000-Won gift certificate, he has to seek for gift certificates of other issuer.

Furthermore, in many cases, a buyer cannot but accept the standardized design of a gift certificate as determined by the issuer. It may be possible for the purchaser to
20 ask the certificate issuer to issue a gift certificate having the design the buyer wants, in the case of purchasing the gift certificate in large quantities. However, if he buys only a small quantity, he has no choice but to purchase the gift certificate of a fixed design. Even in case the certificate issuer allows the purchaser to design the gift certificate, there is still a drawback that the general public has difficulty in designing a gift

certificate, thus cannot make use of this method easily.

As gift certificates are used mostly as presents, the positive effects of a gift certificate will increase if the certificate carries company logo or an advertisement of the presenter, or a short message of appreciation in case the certificate is presented to
5 guests of a wedding ceremony. Accordingly, if the purchasers are allowed to design the gift certificate even for small quantities, this will lead to an increase of the demand for the gift certificate.

Further, the conventional gift certificate has very narrow limitations in respect to the merchandises or merchants for use of the gift certificate, so that a recipient of the
10 conventional gift certificate should buy the designated merchandise or use the certificate only at the designated merchants, which provides a narrow choice of merchandises. For example, if someone receives a gift certificate for shoes, he has no other choice but to purchase shoes of a brand as designated on the gift certificate. Likewise, in case of a gift certificate for books, he has to buy books only.

15 In case gift certificates are presented to a multiple of recipients who have different tastes and need different merchandises, presenting of a gift certificate redeemable only for limited merchandises and usable at limited merchants will reduce the value of the gift certificate for the recipients.

20 DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The present invention, conceived in view of the foregoing, aims to provide a system and method for issuing custom-made gift certificates wherein a purchaser of a gift certificate is allowed to specify the face value of the gift certificate.

Another objective of the present invention is to provide a system and method for issuing custom-made gift certificates which allows purchasers of the gift certificate to design a gift certificate with ease and then order it.

5 Still another objective of the present invention is to provide a system and method for issuing custom-made gift certificates which allows purchasers of the gift certificate to designate the merchants and the merchandise for use of the gift certificate so that the recipients may select from a wide variety of merchants and merchandises.

A further objective of the present invention is to provide a system and method for issuing custom-made gift certificates which allows purchasers of the gift certificate
10 to make online orders of such customized gift certificates with ease.

In order to achieve the above objectives, the present invention introduces a system and method for issuing custom-made gift certificates online. A custom-made gift certificate refers to a gift certificate issued through a process wherein an individual purchaser or a group of purchasers accesses the computer system of the certificate
15 issuing company online via a communication network such as the Internet, designs the format of the gift certificate, specifies the face value of the gift certificate, and select the applicable merchants for use of the gift certificate. When a purchaser orders a gift certificate in this way, the gift certificate ordered online is printed by a printing system linked to the computer system of the certificate issuing company and delivered to the
20 purchaser. In this way, the purchaser can order a gift certificate of the desired face value having a design of his choice, and purchase it with ease and convenience.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a schematic diagram for explaining the method of issuing a gift certificate using the custom-made gift certificate issuing system in accordance with the present invention.

Fig. 2 is a flow chart showing the steps wherein a purchaser orders a gift certificate after having accessed the custom-made gift certificate issuing system according to the present invention.

Figs. 3 through 14 are examples of the menu screens of a purchaser's computer while the purchaser orders a gift certificate after having accessed the custom-made gift certificate issuing system according to the present invention.

10

PREFERRED EMBODIMENT OF THE INVENTION

The preferred embodiments of the present invention are described below in detail referring to the accompanying drawings.

15 Fig. 1 is a schematic diagram showing the method of issuing a gift certificate using the custom-made gift certificate issuing system according to the present invention, Fig. 2 is a flow chart showing the steps wherein a purchaser orders a gift certificate after having accessed the custom-made gift certificate issuing system according to the present invention, and Figs. 3 through 14 are examples of the menu screens of a purchaser's computer while the purchaser orders a gift certificate after having accessed the custom-made gift certificate issuing system according to the present invention.

20

<Login>

In Fig. 1, a purchaser 100 of gift certificate accesses the gift certificate issuing

system 300 through an open network 200 such as the Internet. Here, a screen exemplified in Fig. 3 is provided to the computer of purchaser 100.

In order to access the gift certificate issuing system 300, the purchaser 100 should be a member of the gift certificate issuing system. If he is not a member, he can obtain the membership of the system through a general entering procedure by pressing the "membership registration" button. Upon obtaining the membership, he is given a member ID and can assign a password for the member ID.

The purchaser 100 who is a member enters his member ID and password to login the gift certificate issuing system (Step S110 in Fig. 2).

10

<Selecting the Type of Gift Certificates>

Although various services can be provided for to a member logging in the gift certificate issuing system, the present specification restricts its description to the ordering process of the gift certificates.

15

Anything that may be called a 'gift certificate' comprises, prepaid cards such as telephone card, IC card such as bus card, electronic money, and many others in addition to the conventional paper-print gift certificates. A gift certificate issuing system 300 can include all the gift certificates as aforementioned or can cover only several types of the gift certificates.

20

In case the gift certificate issuing system 300 handles with various types of gift certificates, a list of the types of gift certificates supported by the gift certificate issuing system 300 is provided for as illustrated in Fig. 4, so that the purchaser 100 can select a category he wants (Step S120). In case only one single type is provided, this step of selection can naturally be omitted. Below, a description is given on the assumption that

the purchaser 100 has selected a paper-print gift certificate.

<Selecting a Method for Designing the Gift Certificate>

The present invention provides two methods for designing a gift certificate: The
5 one is general order-method in which purchasers select a template from among multiple
templates provided by the gift certificate issuing system 300 and then enter the details
as they desire into the parts that are allowed to be altered by the purchasers. The other is
full order-method in which purchasers can design unique gift certificates at their
discretion. Alternatively, it is also possible that the purchasers are only allowed to select
10 a design from one or more design samples provided, and not allowed to design a gift
certificate.

The gift certificate issuing system 300 stores a variety of design samples
(templates) for general order-type service in its database.

The gift certificate issuing system 300 allows the purchaser 100 to select either
15 one of the method the general order-method or full order-method, as illustrated in Fig. 5
(Step S130). However, the gift certificate issuing system 300 can also provide only one
of these two methods, in which case, Step S130 shall be omitted.

If the purchaser 100 has selected the full order-method, he can freely design a
unique gift certificate of his own. Where needed, he can also be allowed to determine
20 the size of his gift certificate.

If the purchaser 100 has selected the general order-method, the templates (or
samples) provided by the system 300 are shown on the screen, as illustrated in Fig. 6.
The purchaser 100 can then click one to select a template of his taste.

These templates, provided with parts for entering background pictures,

advertisements, company logos, short messages, etc., the purchasers can click such parts to upload an image file or enter a short message, whereby they can make gift certificates of their unique designs from the templates they choose.

Purchasers can be allowed to enter a short message of their own. However, it is
5 also possible that the purchasers are allowed to select a message from the frequently used ones provided.

Fig. 7 is an exemplified menu screen displayed after clicking the corresponding part in case the templates for short message are provided for. The system 300 has a broad selection of short messages for various cases, so that the purchaser 100 can select
10 an appropriate one from them.

For example, fixed messages such as "Congratulations On Your Success In The Examination!" or "In Memory of Our Excursion", etc. can be provided. Furthermore, partly-fixed messages such as "The Oth Chairman's Cup OO Match" in which "O" parts are to be filled in by the purchasers can also be provided as illustrated in Fig. 8. In
15 this case, purchasers can complete the message by entering particulars in the blanks "O". For example, if "O" part is filled up with "32" and "OO" part with "Tennis", the completed message reads "The 32nd Chairman's Cup Tennis Match".

The purchaser 100 can complete designing of his gift certificate in a way as described above (Step S140). Then, the completed gift certificate is shown on the screen
20 as illustrated in Fig. 9. The purchaser 100 clicks "Continue" button to proceed to the next step if he is satisfied with the completed gift certificate; if not, he can click the "Back" button to re-design his gift certificate.

<Selection of the Applicable Merchants>

The purchaser 100 can select, besides the design of the gift certificate, the applicable merchants and the face value of the gift certificate. First, a description on the selection of the applicable merchants is given below.

Conventional gift certificates, having narrowly limited shops that accept the gift
5 certificates, are inconvenient in use. Especially when the purchaser uses the gift certificates, e.g. for shoes of a particular manufacturer, as presents to a multiple of recipients, it can be the case that a recipient avoids to wear shoes of that manufacturer, or he is already in possession of abundant shoes that he may wish to have other articles.

The present invention avoids the above problem by allowing the purchaser 100
10 to determine a multiple merchants of his choice, to whom the gift certificate is to be used. If the gift certificate is redeemable equally to a specific shoemaker, bookstore, department store, etc., the above problem will not arise.

An example of the process of selecting the applicable merchants is described below, making reference to Figs. 10 to 12.

15 As illustrated in Fig. 10, the purchaser 100 can enter the screen where he can select the applicable merchants, by pressing the "Selection of the merchants" button. Fig. 11 is an exemplified menu screen displayed when the purchaser 100 has pressed the "Selection of the merchants" button. In Fig. 11, the categories of the applicable merchant are listed. The purchaser 100 can select one or more of these categories.

20 Fig. 12 shows an exemplified menu screen of a case when the purchaser 100 has clicked the "department store" button from the listed categories. Purchaser 100 can select a plurality of department stores from among the listed department stores. Fig. 12 shows that "Lotte Department Store" has been selected. For convenience of selection, a "Select all" button can further be provided for.

After selecting department store(s) in Fig. 12, the purchaser 100 can select more of applicable merchants from other categories by pressing the "Back" button and returning to the screen in Fig. 11. When the selection of the applicable merchants is complete after repeating the above procedures, he can proceed to the next step by pressing the "Continue" button on the screen of Fig. 11 or Fig. 12.

Preferably, the list of applicable merchants thus selected, are printed on the gift certificate for convenience of the users. In such a case, the number of applicable merchants can be limited in order not to exceed the available space on the gift certificate. Further, the list of applicable merchants may be placed on the rear side of the gift certificate, so that it does not harm the design of the gift certificate.

<Selection of the Face Value and the Issue Quantity>

Conventional gift certificates have predetermined face values, so that the purchasers may only choose one from the fixed values. A purchaser wishing to use a gift certificate as a present would select one within the limit of his budget. However, the purchaser has to seek for other gift certificates or purchase a plurality of gift certificates having different face values, if a gift certificate of the desired face value is not provided by a desired issuer, which is inconvenient for him.

The present invention overcomes this difficulty by allowing the purchaser 100 to specify the face value of the gift certificate (Step S160).

In the screen in Fig. 10, the purchaser 100 can select a face value of his gift certificate. In Fig. 10, the purchaser 100 is supposed to select one from the listed face values. However, it can also be so arranged that the purchaser 100 enters directly a desired amount. In such a case, it is possible that the minimum amount to be entered is

limited, for example, one thousand Won.

Further, the purchaser 100 is supposed to enter the quantity of the gift certificate to be issued. The purchaser 100 can enter a desired quantity such as 10pcs, 23pcs, 521pcs, etc. Here, the system can put restrictions on the minimum acceptable
5 quantity, such as '50pcs or more allowed'.

Although the present embodiment describes a case wherein purchasers enter the face value and the quantity, another embodiment of the present invention is also possible wherein the available quantity of the gift certificate is calculated and shown after the purchasers enter their budget and the face value they desire.

10 When the purchaser completes designing of his gift certificate by selecting all the details for issuance of the gift certificate, the completed gift certificate is shown on the screen as illustrated in Fig. 13 including particulars such as the face value, quantity, applicable merchants, etc. The purchaser confirms whether the gift certificate is completed as he wishes. Satisfied with the completed gift certificate, the purchaser
15 presses the "Continue" button. If not, he presses the "Back" button to return to the previous step and modifies it.

<Payment for the Gift Certificate>

Payment for the gift certificate can be made using a method commonly used in
20 electronic commerce. As illustrated in Fig. 14, purchasers are allowed to choose one from online deposit, payment by credit card, or by on electronic money, but the payment method is not restricted thereto.

Further, such payment system may be incorporated in the gift certificate issuing system, but an external payment system can also be used.

<Designation of the Recipient(s)>

The gift certificate thus issued can be received by the purchaser 100, or it is also possible that a separate recipient is designated during the ordering procedure (Step S180). In case the purchaser 100 receives the gift certificate, it is not necessary to additionally enter the address of the recipient, since the address of the purchaser 100 is already known from the personal data entered at the registration stage. In case a separate recipient 500 is designated, the address of the recipient 500 should be entered. Further, designating a multiple of recipients 500 is also possible.

10

<Printing and Delivery of the Gift Certificate>

After designing of the gift certificate and payment for it have been completed as described above, the gift certificate issuing system 300 transmits the detail information of the gift certificate such as the design, face value, quantity, applicable merchants, etc. to a printer 400 (refer to Fig. 1). The printer 400 can be a company separate from the gift certificate issuing system 300 or a printing system directly linked to the gift certificate issuing system 300.

15

It is preferable that a specialized counterfeit prevention printing technique is used in printing the gift certificate in order to prevent possible counterfeits.

20

Normally, completed gift certificates are delivered to the purchaser 100 (① in Fig. 1). As aforementioned, however, it is also possible to designate a separate recipient 500 other than the purchaser 100 during the ordering procedure. In such a case, the gift certificate is delivered to the designated separate recipient 500 (② in Fig. 1).

In Fig. 1, the gift certificate is delivered directly from the printer 400 to the

purchaser 100 or the recipient 500. However, in case the printer 400 is an enterprise separate from the gift certificate issuing system 300, the gift certificate will first be delivered from the printer 400 to the gift certificate issuing system 300 and then delivered further to the purchaser 100 or the recipient 500 via postal service or door-to-
5 door parcel service.

Although the present invention has been described above with respect to particular embodiments, it is not limited thereto, allowing modifications, changes, adaptations, etc. within the scope of the present invention, as those skilled in the art will
10 understand.

INDUSTRIAL APPLICABILITY

According to the present invention, purchasers of gift certificates can specify
15 the face values of the gift certificates.

Further, since purchasers can easily design and order gift certificates as they desire, the advertisement effects, message effects of the gift certificates are enhanced.

Moreover, since the purchasers can select the merchants to whom the gift certificate applies, the utility of the gift certificate is enhanced.

20 In addition, since such custom-made gift certificates can easily be ordered online, anyone can use it conveniently, thereby leading to enhance issuance of gift certificates.

What is claimed is:

1. A method for issuing custom-made gift certificate, comprising the steps of:

- 5 a) providing a purchaser of gift certificate with a screen for entering the applicable merchants to whom the gift certificate can be used, the face value of the gift certificate, and the quantity to be issued, by a gift certificate issuing system, after said purchaser has accessed said gift certificate issuing system through the Internet;
- 10 b) calculating the costs for issuing the gift certificate by said gift certificate issuing system and then presenting the calculated costs to the purchaser after said purchaser has entered the applicable merchants, the face value, and the quantity to be issued;
- 15 c) sending the details of the ordered gift certificate by said gift certificate issuing system to a gift certificate printing system after the purchaser has paid said costs for the gift certificate; and,
- d) printing the gift certificate by said gift certificate printing system on the basis of said details.

20 2. A method for issuing custom-made gift certificate wherein a purchaser of gift certificate who has accessed the gift certificate issuing system through the Internet is allowed to order a gift certificate at his disposal, comprising the steps of:

- a) designing a gift certificate by the purchaser at his disposal;
- b) specifying the face value and quantity of the gift certificate by the purchaser;
- and,

c) printing and delivering the gift certificate based on the specification of the purchaser upon payment of the purchaser for the gift certificate.

3. The method for issuing custom-made gift certificate as set forth in Claim 2,
5 which further comprises a step of designating the merchants to whom the gift certificate applies, by the purchaser of gift certificate at his disposal.

4. The method for issuing custom-made gift certificate as set forth in any one of Claims 2 or 3, wherein said step a) further comprises a step in which the purchaser of
10 gift certificate is allowed to select one from a multiple of gift certificate samples and then to enter the data he desires in the parts of the selected sample which is to be filled in by the purchaser.

5. The method for issuing custom-made gift certificate as set forth in Claim 4,
15 wherein said parts to be filled in by the purchaser include company logo of the purchaser.

6. The method for issuing custom-made gift certificate as set forth in any one of Claims 2 or 3, which further comprises a step wherein the purchaser of gift certificate is
20 allowed to enter a short message to be carried on the gift certificate.

7. A system for issuing custom-made gift certificate, which comprises:
a gift certificate issuing server which allows the purchaser of gift certificate to select a design, face value, and quantity of the gift certificate when the purchaser has

accessed said system;

a gift certificate template database which stores a multiple of gift certificate samples for selection by the purchaser of gift certificate;

a gift certificate printing system which prints gift certificates as designed by the purchaser of the gift certificate after having received the details of the gift certificates as specified by said purchaser from said gift certificate issuing server; and,

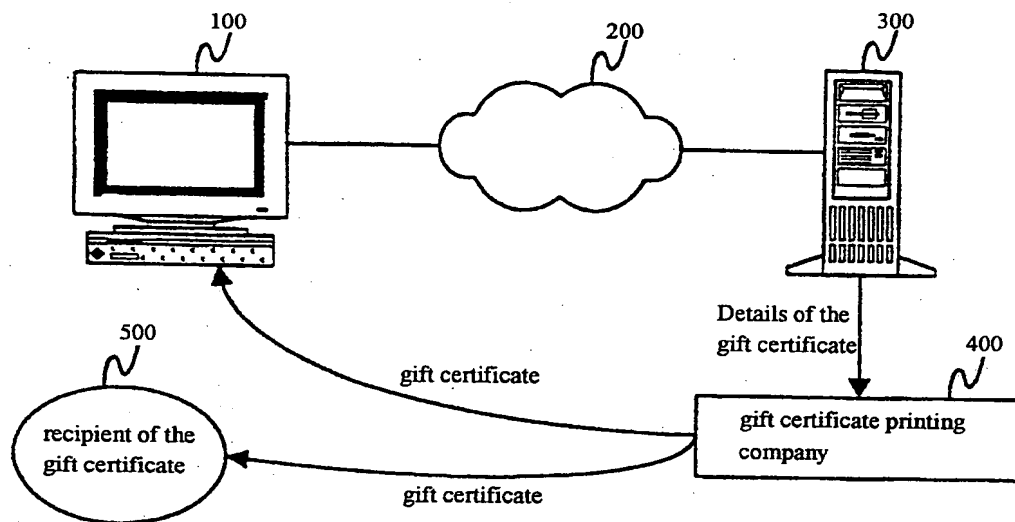
a payment system for processing the payment by said purchaser for said gift certificate.

10 8. The system for issuing custom-made gift certificate as set forth in Claim 7, wherein said gift certificate issuing server has a listing of applicable merchants to whom the gift certificate can be used, so that the purchaser of gift certificate can select the merchants he desires.

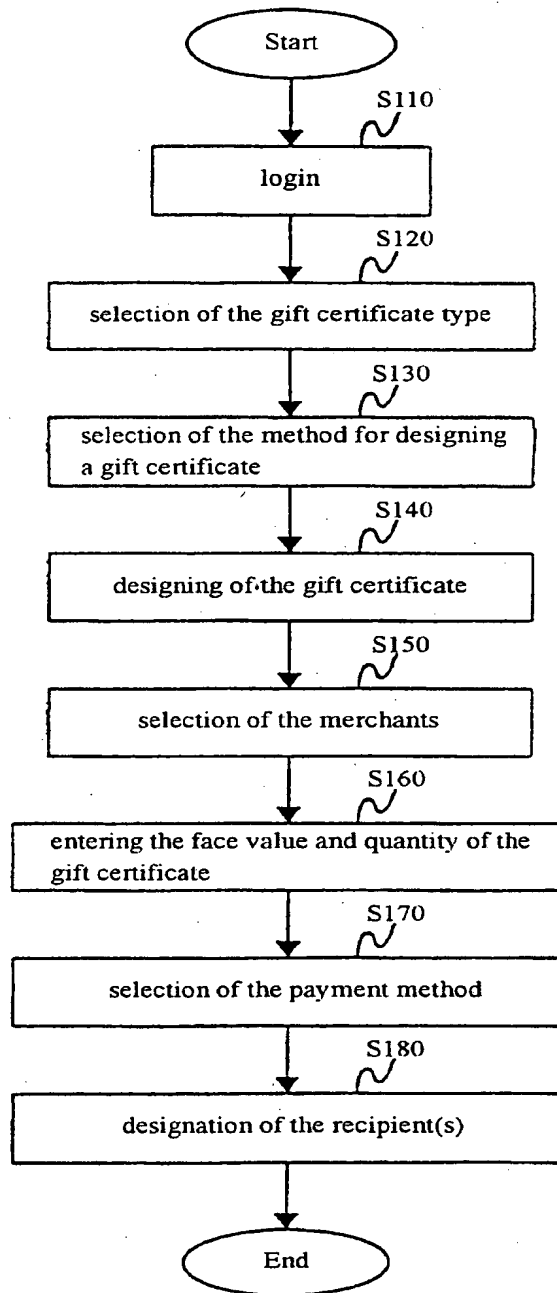
15 9. The system for issuing custom-made gift certificate as set forth in any one of Claims 7 or 8, wherein said gift certificate issuing server has a multiple of gift certificate samples, so that the purchaser of gift certificate can select one of them and design a gift certificate as he desires.

【DRAWINGS】

【Fig. 1】



【Fig. 2】



【Fig. 3】

Welcome to I-TICKET.
New comers, please obtain the membership.

Member ID

Password

【Fig. 4】

Please choose the type of gift certificate.

<input type="button" value="Paper-printed
gift certificate"/>	<input type="button" value="Prepaid card"/>
<input type="button" value="IC card"/>	<input type="button" value="Electronic
money"/>

【Fig. 5】

How do you like your gift certificate designed?

General order-type	You can choose your favorite one from the samples.
Full order-type	You can freely design your gift certificate.

【Fig.6】

Please choose a sample.

A D	Design	Advertisement
<div>Advertisement</div>		<div>Advertisement</div>
<div>◀</div>		<div>▶</div>

Cancel

【Fig.7】

Please select the category of your message to be carried in your gift certificate.

<u>Celebration of birthday</u>	<u>Celebration of graduation</u>
<u>Anniversary</u>	<u>Love to parents</u>
<u>Event</u>	<u>Gratitude</u>
<u>Health</u>	<u>Children</u>
<u>Others</u>	

【Fig.8】

Please select a message.

☐ The Chairman's Cup Game


☐ Alumni Reunion of School

☐ The Anniversary of Foundation

☐ To the Event of Excursion

【Fig.9】

Please review the following completed gift certificate.



If you want modifications, please click the 'Back' button; If you want to have your gift certificate as shown above, please click the 'Continue' button.

Continue

Back

【Fig.10】

Face value of the gift certificate ▼

Quantity to be issued

selection of the merchants

Continue

Back

【Fig.11】

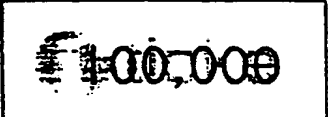
<u>Shoes</u>	<u>Department stores</u>
<u>Ladies' apparels</u>	<u>Men's apparels</u>
<u>Children's wears</u>	<u>Restaurants</u>
<u>Bookstores</u>	<u>Music</u>
<u>Others</u>	
<input type="button" value="Continue"/>	<input type="button" value="Back"/>

【Fig.12】

<input type="radio"/> Hyundai	<input type="radio"/> Shinsegae
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Lotte	<input type="radio"/> Newcore
<input type="radio"/> LG Shopping	<input type="radio"/> Le Carrefour
<input type="radio"/> Kim's Club	<input type="radio"/> Printemps
<input type="button" value="Continue"/>	<input type="button" value="Back"/>

【Fig.13】

Please confirm your gift certificate as follows:

Outlook of the gift certificate 

Face value : 100,000
Quantity to be issued : 50
Merchants : [click for the list](#)
Total amount : 5,000,000

[Continue](#) [Back](#)

【Fig.14】

Please select the payment mode.

[Credit card](#)

[Online deposit](#)

[Electronic money](#)

[Continue](#) [Back](#)

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/KR00/01113

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC7 G06F 17/60

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC7 G06F 17/60, IPC7 G06F 19/00

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y	JP 10312415 A (DAINIPPON PRINTING CO.LTD) NOV. 24 1998 ABSTRACT	1-9
A	US 5243174 A (GIFT CERTIFICATE CENTER INC.) SEP. 07 1993 ABSTRACT	1-9
A	JP 11110353 A (TOSHIBA CORP.) APRIL 23 1999 ABSTRACT	1-9
A	US 4949256 A (HUMBLE DAVID RAYMOND) AUG. 14 1990 ABSTRACT	1-9

☐ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

☐ See patent family annex.

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"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art

"&" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

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Name and mailing address of the ISA/KR

Korean Industrial Property Office
Government Complex-Taejon, Dunsan-dong, So-ku, Taejon
Metropolitan City 302-701, Republic of Korea

Facsimile No. 82-42-472-7140

Authorized officer

SONG, Dae Jong

Telephone No. 82-42-481-5992

